

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AEC-11 AECE-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 ACDA-19 CIAE-00 INR-11 IO-14 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 RSC-01 SCI-06 FEAE-00 AID-20 IGA-02

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 PA-04 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 DRC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3220

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 10672

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR,IN

SUBJECT: TARAPUR

REF: STATE 175164, STATE 170818

1. THE PROPOSED LETTER TO DR. SETHNA SEEMS FINE ESPECIALLY AS YOU ARE GOING TO TALK ABOUT IT WITH THE INDIAN EMBASSY BEFORE ACTUALLY SENDING IT. MAY I SUGGEST THAT THE TEXT IS A BIT ABRUPT AND DOES NOT SUFFICIENTLY CONVEY OUR INTENTION OF LIMITING WHAT IT IS WE ARE ASKING OF THE INDIANS. I TAKE THE LIBERTY OF PROPOSING AN ALTERNATE TEXT, WHICH INCLUDES A REFERENCE TO THE SECRETARY'S DESIRE TO DISCUSS THIS SUBJECT IN ITS BROADEST ASPECTS WHEN HE COMES TO NEW DELHI IN OCTOBER.

2. THIS, IT SEEMS TO US, IS THE KEY CONSIDERATION. WE MUST ACT SO AS TO ENSURE THAT WHEN THE SECRETARY ARRIVES HE CAN HAVE THE "VERY PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN INDIA AS A NUCLEAR COUNTRY AND US ON MEANS TO PREVENT FURTHER SPREAD NUCLEAR EXPLOSION TECHNOLOGY." WHICH WE PROPOSED TO KEWAL SINGH DURING THEIR MEETING OF AUGUST SECOND.

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3. THE ESSENTIAL FACT HERE IS THAT THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY OF GETTING THE INDIANS TO MAKE ANY SIGNIFICANT CONCESSION TO US ON THE SUBJECT OF NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS BY THREATENING, IN AN EXCHANGE OF LETTERS, TO WITHHOLD SOME MATERIALS WHICH THEY CAN GET FROM ANOTHER SOURCE IF IT COMES RIGHT DOWN TO IT. IN THIS MATTER THE INDIANS ARE NOT IN THE POSITION EVEN OF BORROWERS, MUCH LESS OF BEGGERS. THEY HAVE THE TECHNOLOGY, AND IF THEY WANT TO, THEY CAN HAVE THE BOMB. IF THEY WANT TO THEY CAN MAKE BOMBS AND MAKE MONEY OUT OF MAKING BOMBS BY SELLING THEM TO ARABS OR ANYBODY ELSE THEY LIKE. IF WE ARE TO CONTAIN THIS "MOST URGENT PROBLEM", TO QUOTE THE SECRETARY'S TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE, WE MUST DEVELOP A "UNIVERSAL POLICY OF NON-PROLIFERATION." THIS INCLUDES INDIA, AND THE ONLY WAY TO ACHIEVE THIS IS THROUGH A CAREFUL DIPLOMACY OF THE KIND THE SECRETARY NOW ENVISAGES. I BELIEVE IT TO BE THE CASE THAT OUR REQUEST FOR WRITTEN ASSURANCES ON TARAPUR ANTEDATED THE SECRETARY'S DECISION TO MOVE FORWARD ON THIS FRONT. IT WAS A REASONABLE PRECAUTION WHEN IT WAS TAKEN, BUT IT HAS NOW BECOME ESSENTIALLY SUPERFLUOUS.

4. IN A LONG CONVERSATION WITH KEWAL SINGH ON FRIDAY HE RECOUNTED HIS VISITS TO CANADA AND THE US. HE DESCRIBED THE DIFFICULTY INDIA WOULD HAVE IN MAKING A PUBLIC PRONOUNCEMENT THAT IT WILL NOT TRANSFER EXPLOSION TECHNOLOGY TO OTHER COUNTRIES, REFERRING FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY EXPERIENCE WITH HIM, BUT HARDLY FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY EXPERIENCE OF INDIA, TO THE MATTER OF DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN PERSONS ON THE BASIS OF THE "SHADE OF THEIR FACE". INDIA COULD NOT, IN HIS VIEW, SPECIFICALLY STATE THAT WHILE IT EXPECTED TO BE TRUSTED WITH SUCH TECHNOLOGY, IT WOULD NOT ITSELF TRUST OTHER UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES. HOWEVER, HE CONTINUED, INDIA HAD NO INTENTION OF EXPORTING SUCH TECHNOLOGY. INDIA HAD BEEN ASKED TO DO SO BY A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES AND HAD DECLINED. INDIA DOES, HOWEVER, NEED AMERICAN FUEL FOR TARAPUR, HE CONTINUED AND HOPES THIS MATTER CAN BE SETTLED SOON. HE POINTED OUT INDIA'S WILLINGNESS TO SELL BACK TO US EVERY GRAM OF PLUTONIUM THEIR REACTORS MIGHT PRODUCE, AND ASKED WHETHER

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THIS WOULD NOT BY DEFINITION REMOVE ANY OBJECTION WE MIGHT HAVE.

5. IN MY JUDGMENT THE INDIANS ARE BEING REASONABLE ABOUT THIS ONE MATTER I.E. TARAPUR. IT IS LATE IN THE DAY FOR US TO ASK WRITTEN GUARANTEES FOR A REACTOR COMPLEX WE STARTED UP IN 1969. IT IS IN ANY EVENT MISTAKEN TO PRESS THEM HARD JUST EIGHT WEEKS BEFORE THE SECRETARY GETS HERE.

6. SUGGESTED TEXT:

DEAR DR. SETHNA:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR LETTER OF JULY 10 RESPONDING TO MINE
OF JUNE 19 CONCERNING SHIPMENTS OF ENRICHED URANIUM FUEL AND
OTHER MATERIAL TO THE TARAPUR ATOMIC POWER STATION.

YOUR RESPONSE LEADS US TO BELIEVE THAT WE MAY NOT HAVE BEEN
SUFFICIENTLY CLEAR IN OUR FIRST LETTER. WHAT WE ASK IS SIMPLY
WRITTEN ASSURANCE FROM YOUR GOVERNMENT THAT THE SPECIAL NUCLEAR
MATERIAL THAT HAS BEEN OR IS HEREAFTER MADE AVAILABLE FOR, OR
USED OR PRODUCED IN, THE TARAPUR ATOMIC POWER STATION WILL BE
DEVOTED EXCLUSIVELY TO THE NEEDS OF THAT STATION OR OTHER AGREED
PURPOSES THAT DO NOT INCLUDE USE IN A NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE DEVICE.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU ON THIS IN ORDER THAT WE
MAY PROMPTLY PROCEED WITH FURTHER SHIPMENTS. SINCERELY, DIXY LEE
RAY, END TEXT.

MOYNIHAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NPT, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS, TARAPUR II, MINISTERIAL VISITS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 AUG 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CollinP0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974NEWDE10672
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740220-0627
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740855/aaaabvgx.tel
Line Count: 133
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STATE 175164, STATE 170818
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CollinP0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16-Aug-2002 by WorrelSW>; APPROVED <25 FEB 2003 by CollinP0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TARAPUR
TAGS: PFOR, OVIP, IN, US, (KISSINGER, HENRY A)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005